

Washington, DC -- Today U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) announced a \$1,233,212 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant to fully reimburse the city of Oneonta for improvements to the waste water plant which was damaged in floods last year.

"I am thrilled that FEMA has announced it will help the City of Oneonta recover from last year's devastating floods," said Arcuri. "Last year, heavy rains and severe flooding damaged property and infrastructure in the City of Oneonta and across much of the Southern Tier. Finally, FEMA has come through to help these communities get back on their feet. Last week, I questioned a senior FEMA official about the agencies slow response to natural disasters such as these floods, and I am glad that they have taken action to help localities rebuild."

The grant from FEMA will cover almost all of the project costs to return the plant to its pre-disaster condition - including engineering costs. The effort includes replacement of electrical wiring, motors, pumps, variable frequency drives and equipment related to the waste water treatment plan.

"We are extremely pleased that the persistence of Congressman Arcuri and our Senators has paid off. Congressman Arcuri has focused the spotlight on the needs of our flood damaged city facilities," said Mayor John Nader of Oneonta. "Receiving \$1.2 million will allow the City to repair our waste water treatment operation with minimal impact on our local taxpayers. Without the assistance of our federal representatives, the reimbursement process would have been much longer and more laborious. Oneonta residents should be very pleased with the level of cooperation between city government and members of Congress."

Last week during a hearing of the Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management subcommittee Arcuri (D-Utica) questioned a high level FEMA official regarding FEMA's ability to respond to natural disasters, including the extensive flooding that occurred in Oneonta and throughout the Southern Tier region last year.

Arcuri questioned Vice Admiral Harvey Johnson, Deputy Administrator for FEMA, regarding preparedness spending for natural disasters - noting his concern that FEMA was slighting natural disasters like the flooding that occurred in Oneonta last June.

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